

## INDIGENOUS DIGITAL MEDIA AND THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNET ON THE COLUMBIA PLATEAU

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### ABSTRACT

Native American communities historically indigenous to the Columbia Plateau in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho use the internet in acts of historical representation. The internet provides to tribal people a medium through which to accurately represent issues of place, time, and performance. The internet, however, is changing, challenging some tribal representational practices. Participation with the internet is divided into two historical, technical, and cultural phases: Web 1.0 (1994–2004) and Web 2.0 (2005–today). The Web 1.0 sites discussed in this article include the Lifelong Learning modules of the Schitsu’umsh (Coeur d’Alene), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR), and the Nimípuu (Nez Perce Tribe). Explored are ways Web 1.0 features gave tribal people control over their official historiography, while new forms of collective or Web 2.0 internet authorship may be endangering officially sanctioned tribal histories. An example of Web 2.0, the Colville tribal social media site *One Heart for the People* is briefly mobilized to illustrate how Web 1.0 tribal historiography opposes theories of culture.

### Introduction

Native American communities historically indigenous to the Columbia Plateau in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho use the internet in acts of historical representation. The internet provides to tribal people a medium through which to accurately represent issues of place, time, and performance. The internet, however, is changing, challenging some tribal representational practices.

Participation with the internet is divided into two historical, technical, and cultural phases: Web 1.0 (1994–2004) and Web 2.0 (2005–today). The Web 1.0 sites discussed in this article include the Lifelong Learning modules of the Schitsu’umsh (Coeur d’Alene), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR), and the Nimípuu (Nez Perce Tribe). Explored are ways Web 1.0 features give tribal people control over their official historiography, while new forms of collective or Web 2.0 internet authorship may be endangering officially sanctioned tribal histories. An example of Web 2.0, the Colville tribal social media site *One Heart for the People* (Colville Confederated Tribes n.d.), hereafter referred to as *One Heart*, is briefly mobilized to illustrate how Web 1.0 tribal historiography opposes theories of culture.<sup>1</sup>

## Ethnopoetics and the Internet

The narrator of a Web 1.0 Schitsu'umsh Lifelong Learning Module asks, "Why do the oral traditions offer you an indispensable and unique pathway into the lives and culture of the Schitsu'umsh people?" (Coeur d'Alene 2002a). Consider for a moment that these "oral traditions" are being translated via publically networked multimedia websites. Websites are not substitutes for physical human interaction, and visuality and hearing are different forms of phenomenological reception, but in some ways the experience of viewing these Web 1.0 websites is analogous to participation in oral traditions. Oral histories can be "effectively, appropriately, and authentically told using the Internet" (Frey 2001:1) for three reasons: 1) Digital multimedia is aural and visual; 2) through linking from page to page, the viewer creates non-sequential and personalized pathways through stories, and; 3) like archaeological sites in traditional territories, the intellectual information remains the product and property of the Schitsu'umsh, Nimípuu, and the CTUIR (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation 2003).

In what ways are Web 1.0 websites designed with Native Americans useful for acts of cultural representation? In what ways do they misrepresent how culture changes through time? Oral traditions do not mirror new media practices but rather enable the performative aspects of tribal communication. My approach is what Tedlock defines as ethnopoetics: "a decentered poetics, an attempt to hear and read the poetries of distant others, outside the Western tradition as we know it now" (Tedlock n.d.). Ethnopoetics focuses on the contemporary interpretations of the present and the past and is a useful theoretical tool with which to view Native American websites. These sites represent ethnopoetics refracted through the affordances of write-only Web 1.0 communication technologies. At the same time that these websites offer tools that fit with traditional concepts and narrative strategies, these websites do not allow for audience participation, and therefore do not fully represent how culture is a processual and participatory project. They might not intend to be participatory but for whatever reason the absence of interactivity results in a misrepresentation the dynamic relationship between narrative and culture. From an official tribal perspective, the internet modules are excellent ways of representing officially sanctioned perspectives on space, time, and performance. The new forms of internet authorship, called Web 2.0, emerging not from individuals officially charged to tell history but from the voluntary collaborations of many individuals, may be threatening to tribal historians hoping to secure an official account.

## Lifelong Learning Online Project

The Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR), and the Nimípuu (Nez Perce Tribe) are represented on Web 1.0 multimedia modules (Coeur d'Alene 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d, 2002e, 2002f, 2002g, 2002h; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation 2003; Nez Perce Tribe 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d, 2001e). From 2001-2003, the modules were conceived, written, designed, and created by a committee of elders, tribal members, technology experts, and anthropologists under the aegis of the Lifelong Learning Online Project Committee. The modules are the intellectual and physical property of

the Coeur d'Alene Tribe<sup>2</sup> (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2002f). Projects similar to the Schitsu'umsh module exist for the Nimípuu<sup>3</sup> (Nez Perce Tribe 2001a:iii). These video websites or modules were created to have the Tribes present their own take on post-colonial history.

Within the tribal internet modules, historical storytelling and a visually affirmative performance are present. Traditionally dances, stories, dramas, and visual representations are mobilized in graphic modes of pedagogy. While these forms of storytelling and teaching have been happening since time immemorial, this is one of the first tribal multimedia websites attempting to merge traditional forms and contemporary information technology. Web 1.0 is but one method amongst many to teach about traditional culture. On the reservation in-body forms of teaching continue. Externally, however, representation of traditional culture is quickly leaving the jurisdiction of traditional elders. Traditional forms of privacy, secrecy, and revelation can no longer keep private the representation of tribal knowledge. In order to provide accurate representation of themselves, these Columbia Plateau tribes made these websites in collaboration with a team of technologists and scholars (Fig. 1).

In Web 1.0 fashion, these sites do not allow visitors to upload or comment and so the site has no present public participation. As such, these static web pages have solidified an official history and achieved the goal of educating non-Natives about Native history. My argument is that while these websites offer acceptable representations of space, movement, and performance, their stationary historiography works against the transitional qualities of culture.<sup>4</sup>

The screenshot shows the opening frame of the Coeur d'Alene Lifelong Learning Module. The header features a yellow and blue gradient with the text "Lifelong Learning Online" and "the LEWIS & CLARK Rediscovery Project". A navigation menu includes "Main Map", "Expedition", "Culture", "Geography", "People", "Maps", and "Nature". The main content area is split into two columns. The left column, titled "SCENARIO", contains introductory text about the Schitsu'umsh - Coeur d'Alene Indians and a link to the full scenario. The right column, titled "Schitsu'umsh Coeur d'Alene Indians", features a multimedia player with a video thumbnail of Ernie Stensgar, a "28K 56K 256K" speed indicator, and an "HTML Transcript" link. Below the player is a welcome message from Ernie Stensgar, Former Coeur d'Alene Tribal Chairman, and a call to action "Aa! Qhest, s'laqht Enter Here".

Fig. 1. Opening frame of the Coeur d'Alene Lifelong Learning Module.

## Tribalism and Indigenous Digital Media

These Web 1.0 modules are forms of representation rooted in a type of tribalism. Tribalism is a contemporary cultural consolidation rooted in indigeneity. As social praxis, tribalism is a renaissance; an empowerment that emerges from perceived loss of traditional knowledge in the wake of colonization and modernity. In so many ways, tribalism is a reaction to the cultural dislocations and forced confederations incurred by nineteenth and twentieth century modernism (McNickle 1973). Unlike nationalism, tribalism has observable origins in geographically extant cultural traditions. A “tribe” is a colonial construct. “Tribalism” is rooted in tradition while affirming contemporary tribal identity (Mafeje 1971; Southall 1970). Thus, the internet is seen as a place to decolonize through accurate representations. Indigenous digital media is conceived by tribal members as a vehicle for twenty-first century tribalism.

Indigenous digital media (IDM) is the traditionally inflected digital content made by indigenous people. In this phrase, “indigenous” refers to the pre-colonial first inhabitants of a geography, in this case the Columbia Plateau. IDM offers new modes of historiography, biography, and archaeography in endeavors of tribalism. IDM presents, preserves, and projects traditional cultural values across the internet. Tribalism is about resiliency and resurgence. IDM and tribalism conflate into an adaptive and resistant form of “innovative traditionalism” (Ginsberg 2002:54). As tradition mixes with new media, new narratives and performances follow. Several twenty-first century tribal projects are supported by IDM, including: claiming, storytelling, celebrating survivance, “indigenizing,” intervening, revitalizing, networking, representing, envisioning, reframing, naming, creating, and sharing (Smith 2001:143–157).

Indigenous people embrace and exploit new communicative technologies to legislate for sovereignty in the control of their identities, histories, and representations. Throughout the world, indigenous peoples use videography to personalize, magnify, and vitalize the politics of survivance (Ginsberg, Abu-Lughod, and Larkin 2002). Indigenous people around the world

typically employ modern visual media to further public awareness of treaty rights, land claims, hunting and fishing rights, religious freedom, language preservation, repatriation of artifacts, and reburial of ancestral remains (Prims 2002:62-64).

Indigenous people use video cameras and computers in

documenting traditional activities with elders; creating works to teach young people literacy in their own languages; engaging with dominant circuits of mass media and projecting political struggles through mainstream as well as alternative arenas; communicating among dispersed kin and communities on a range of issues; using video as legal documents in negotiating with states; presenting videos on state television to assert their presence televisually within national imaginaries; and creating award winning films (Ginsberg, Abu-Lughod, and Larkin 2002:10).

The internet modules or videos created by the Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene Tribe) illustrate the most salient uses of IDM. The Schitsu'umsh are a Columbia Plateau Native American tribe whose traditional territories are in eastern Washington, north central Idaho, and western Montana. None of the other tribe to my knowledge within or outside of the Columbia Plateau had incorporated video and maps together to create traditionally inflected online stories. Who exactly uses these sites or how many people view them are private issues only the web administrators know. Reception, circulation, and use of the websites are not the subject of this article.

The Schitsu'umsh and Nimíipuu modules employ a wide range of media, including video interviews, traditional songs, tribal dances<sup>5</sup>, oral mythologies, language lessons<sup>6</sup>, linguistic translations, and interactive maps. The Schitsu'umsh, offering almost six hours of digital video, capitalize on the hypermedium to express their stories, histories, dances, perspectives, and arts in culturally specific ways. The Schitsu'umsh narrator's "sincere desire" is to impart "Hnkhwelkhwnet . . . our way of life in the world" to the participants so they may "better appreciate the world as if through Schitsu'umsh eyes" (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2002h). The narrator evidently believes that video can communicate some nuances of Schitsu'umsh culture and he is willing to share this lifeway with anyone with a dial-up modem and a computer. This is distinct to the privacy and selectivity with which most tribes view teachings of their lifeways. It is important to note that the Schitsu'umsh content was thoroughly reviewed for their appropriateness and authenticity by the elders of the Tribe, the Cultural Committee, and Tribal Council, before publication; there was much they considered not appropriate for public dissemination.

Teachings of both traditional lifeways and contemporary politics appear throughout the Schitsu'umsh module. Viewers can learn about traditional gathering practices, spiritual concepts, and dancing forms. They can also see and hear the Schitsu'umsh Tribal Chairman meditate on the responsibility of the Schitsu'umsh to educate future generations. Figuring prominently are indigenous perspectives on tribal sovereignty including reflections on Manifest Destiny, missionaries, allotments, wars, the establishment of the Reservation, cultural resource management, and future challenges. Use of the internet and the associated hardware needed to engage it empowers reflection on cultural preservation. In the act of viewing and listening, important definitions of what is Native American are being enacted publically.

On the Columbia Plateau, no historical analysis of the major brand of anthropological media that preceded IDM—the documentary ethnographic film—has ever been conducted. The ethnographic films depicting Columbia Plateau culture likely follow the trend exhibited on the Northwest Coast. That is, the tribal people are supporting characters as opposed to technologists and producers (Morris 1994). They are the objects, not the subjects, of the films. On the contrary, the modules created by the Schitsu'umsh and Nimíipuu tribes represent the first emergence of indigenous moving-picture historiography on the Columbia Plateau.

## Performance

The multimedia environment may be more conducive to traditional storytelling than print. This is not a comparison between print and orality in traditional society, but rather a discussion of the technological affordances of the internet. What can the internet do that print

cannot and how would those affordances be used by traditional storytellers? Tribal history is “grounded in two interrelated systems of communication that predate the written word: drawing and speaking” (Howe 2003:162). Vizenor agrees, “tribal narratives are heard and remembered in *pictofictions* and *pictomyths* without closure” (1994:100). Traditional modes of communication were never textual. They were performative and oratory. Symbolic and iconographic drawing, painting, and etching were authoritative means of communication. The relationship between performer and participating audience was heavily emphasized by pictographic and performative modes. The hypermedia and emergent post-textuality of the internet enables communications that are analogous to these traditional forms.

The internet is a place for performance. This characteristic bodes well for Native Americans, whose traditional form of historiography is performative. In the Native American past, major forms of communication were audio, haptical, visual, and performative. A non-textual people collectively remember historical events and origin narratives in oral traditions, landscapes, and embodied movements. Oral traditions and the internet conflate the aural, visual, spatial, and corporeal.

Traditionally,

performances exploited place, time, and other elements such as feasting, music, drumming, dancing and smoking to produce a multisensorial environment in which participants could experience with all their senses the historical moment. Conflating all trajectories containing sacred information and sensuality was intended to deeply encode traditional knowledge through the memory-etching powers of profound sensuality into the participants (2003:166–167).

On the Columbia Plateau, raconteurs use multisensual tactics and the spectators are participants:

During the narrative performance, listeners periodically respond by saying aloud, *i●●!* [ee!] ‘yes’ (Jacobs 1934–1937, 1:x; Teit 1912a:349) or as among the Pend d’Oreille, giving the hand sign of hooking the index finger and drawing it toward you as a sign for ‘getting it’ (Clarence Woodcock, personal communication 1991) (Frey and Hymes 1998:587).

The raconteur is dramatic, compelling, playful, and animate with intonation, pauses, gesture, rhythms, and references in a ritual performance (Frey and Hymes 1998: 594, 595, 598). An audience member saying *i●●!* would not be considered interruptive. It was not an iterative process in the same way Web 2.0 databases build upon each other; rather it was a supportive gesture. Likewise, in digital representations of archaeological projects there are entrances, exits, dead-ends, thresholds, crises, incidents, interruptions, repetitions, discontinuities, incoherence, and integrations (Pearson and Shanks 2001:125).

Howe continues,

Histories from an indigenous tribal perspective must be presented in a format that can accommodate *multimedia* data and structure it in a *nonsequential* order (Howe 2003:167, emphasis added).

Capable of being both multisensual and nonsequential, digital multimedia is a suitable form for a graphic and oratorical history (Howe 2003:167). The internet is one representational mode that has the capacity to transcend textuality and move towards an iconographic, speaking, and performative historiography. However, these Web 1.0 modules only go so far. As Frey and Hymes (1998) argue, participation is important in Native orality and a more collaborative participation comes with Web 2.0. The capacities to leave comments, tags, and videoblogs were not yet fully utilized in this Web 1.0 era of internet authorship. This is not to suggest the elder storytellers would in any way welcome Web 2.0 capabilities for leaving comments, tags, and videoblogs. For example, others would not be encouraged to comment in the midst of an elder's story. Traditionally, individuals have the right to re-tell the oral traditions or be granted that right by others so that they can share those stories at the appropriate time.

According to elders, these traditions are timeless, created in a time before the coming of Human Peoples and handed down from generation to generation fundamentally with their "bones" intact. No bones are added or deleted, while at the same time still allowing the storyteller or singer to add his or her own outer clothing to the story or song, giving it a unique personality. The basic structure of the story and song, however, has remarkable continuity, remaining fundamentally unchanged. In the Nimípuu module there are songs recorded between 1897 and 1909 that have a continuity today. Whether the story was recorded in 1900 or 2000, there should be little change in the underlying structure of the story. Historical continuity, that is, reoccurring formats, content, and performances styles in the storytelling, is retained in these Web 1.0 sites.

The question remains, however, in what ways can participatory media best address the needs of tribal storytellers? Secondly, would tribes use such Web 2.0 technology today given that elected tribal officials and historians would lose their authorial power to produce official history?

Performers of tribal histories often depart from standard scripts—spontaneously fortifying their performances with anecdotes, asides, and commentary. More than whimsical digressions, these tangents modernize the traditional history by making it pertinent to contemporary people and the issues they face. A political problem, insight, passing raven, or wind gust may trigger the raconteur. A fugue results, integrating the traditional wisdom into the social present for the participating people. In this way, the story is publicly modified. This integrates the past with the present, making new the traditional wisdom. As Vizenor explains,

In the oral tradition, the mythic origins of tribal people are creative expressions, original eruptions in time, not a mere recitation or a recorded narrative in grammatical time. The teller of stories is an artist, a person of wit and imagination, who relumes the diverse memories of the visual past into the expressions and metaphors of the present (Vizenor 1994:113).

The interpretive archaeologist is also a raconteur making "juxtapositions and interpenetrations of the historical and the contemporary, the political and the poetic, the factual and the fictional, the discursive and the sensual" (Pearson and Shanks 2001:159). It could be argued that performativity, subject to adaptation in the present, is akin to the non-sequential digressions that are available to internet participants as they navigate from site to site, reading text then watching video.

While only a text resource at its inception in 1994, the internet became a host for multimedia “drawing and speaking” by 2002, when the modules were produced. In this move towards pictorial and performative media, the internet, like tribal histories, is grounded in “drawing and speaking” (Howe 2003:162). Frey states that, “Should the *ee*’s cease, so too the story” (Frey 2001:6). He correlates the vocal gesture “*ee!*” [i••!] with the “clicking of the mouse to assure interactivity” (Frey 2001:9). While the ‘click’ is more authoritarian, a new engagement emerges as the participant works with the raconteur through the non-human technological world (Haraway 1991, 1997). The IDM modules exhibit how traditional oral and performative tactics are made new.

The internet offers tribal designers of digital histories a forum where ancestral communicative tactics can be curated and created. The internet allows traditional historians to foray into the “dot-commons.” While losing much semiotic or persuasive integrity in the shift from personal interaction to web-based spectatorship the links between personal performance and multimedia spectatorship are nearer than performance and textuality. Tribes with a multimedia web presence are creating histories more akin to traditional forms than histories written in books.

## Storyscapes and Digital Ecologies

Travel is a recurring metaphor for both storytelling and cyberculture. Columbia Plateau Native Americans speak of “traveling the trails and exploring a territory” and of “paddling a canoe on the rivers of the myth world” (Frey 2001:6). Back when we called it cyberspace we used to *surf the net*. In both situations, “the human is enveloped within a dynamic and on-going text, a text in process, and thus within a world that is emerging, that is being brought forth, that is in the making” (Frey 2001:6; see also Latour 1993).

While traveling, the approach and vision of the viewer is of supreme concern to the Schitsu’umsh. They state that “how” one learns from a foreign culture is as important as “what” one learns (Coeur d’Alene 2002b). Schitsu’umsh capitalize on the different worldviews, effectively contrasted in the multimedia medium, between indigenous creator and participating viewer. They invite the participant to travel and make choices from an embodiment of *hnkhwelkhwnet*, the Schitsu’umsh “way of life in the world.” This interaction between self-examination and action creates the ecology for plurality, reflexivity, and the opportunity to travel on the First Peoples path.

According to Columbia Plateau history, the First Peoples lived before human people but prepared the world for the human people. A challenge of the Schitsu’umsh module is to “stay on the trails established by the First Peoples” (Coeur d’Alene 2002b). The narrator warns that the viewer’s perspective may make it difficult to follow the First People. The narrator asks the viewer, “before you take a look at us take a closer look at yourself” (Coeur d’Alene 2002b). So, while the environment of the internet encourages visitors to exercise their discretion and liberty, the participant is challenged to follow the faint but extant trail of the First Peoples in the module. “Heart knowledge” as opposed to head knowledge, as Schitsu’umsh spiritual leader Cliff SiJohn articulates in three video clips, will help the viewer navigate the First Peoples’ trails (Coeur d’Alene 2002a). All of this reflexivity and introspection is designed to invite the viewer to be a participant in the Schitsu’umsh culture.

Traditional and digital communications share the metaphor of travel. The term “tamastlikt” means “interpretation” in the Umatilla’s Sahaptin dialectic. In a video clip, Martha Franklin uses the term tamastlikt to describe the journeyer’s path through the Umatilla module. Franklin says, “tamastlikt, the word in itself, is an Indian word and it’s a full word, it doesn’t mean just to tell you what happened. . . . So you need to come in here and to examine, to look to turn, to examine. And then the word becomes full” (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation 2003). The word tamastlikt poses an open-ended and engaged hermeneutical method for approaching the Umatilla module. The multiple choices possible as one navigates the internet help make the word and praxis of *tamastlikt* possible (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation 2003).

In a video clip from the Schitsu’umsh module, Cliff SiJohn, sitting near a sacred sweat lodge, instructs the viewer to disengage and empathically observe, “We have no books to give you, we have no pencils to hand out. What I want you to do is to sit back and open your heart” (Coeur d’Alene 2002a). Franklin of the Umatilla and SiJohn of the Schitsu’umsh, and raconteurs in general, request that the participant be available and curious. This request is particularly possible to reply to on internet modules that enable visitors to explore diverse, multisensual paths with personalized, multilinear connections. At the same time, the request coordinates well with Web 1.0 passivity. Web 1.0 websites like this require empathic observation, not co-production of content—this was only possible with Web 2.0, as described next.

## Sacred Times and Places in Cyberspace

The Schitsu’umsh narrator states, “In the act of storytelling the creation time is re-witnessed and re-traveled, and brought forth into this time. The stories that occurred in a distant past are continued into the present” (Coeur d’Alene 2002a). The Nimíipuu narrator states, “In the act of re-telling these ancient accounts, and especially when told in the Nimíipuu language, the listeners are made participants of the unfolding events” (Nez Perce Tribe 2001d). Cliff SiJohn says to the viewer, “it is time for you to listen, sit back, prepare yourself, for you are going to take a walk with the Coeur d’Alene Indian people through the real world of the Indian people” (Coeur d’Alene 2002a). Clearly the tribal spokespeople were idealistic about the transference of empathy, identification, and participation via the internet. If the internet can coax visitors to re-witness the “creation time . . . through the real world of the Indian people” what can the internet do to bring the viewer to the specific places and times so important in Columbia Plateau oral traditions?

The Schitsu’umsh explain the relationship between stories and actual landscapes: “the accounts of Coyote and all the meanings and significances, all the teachings, are thus embedded in the river beds and mountain ridges” (Coeur d’Alene Tribe 2002e). Native American history is not a portable paper book that can be read or experienced anywhere. Columbia Plateau Native American histories consist of inter-personal engagements with landscapes mediated by story. Tribal histories are told in specific places and times and utilize particular environmental elements to enhance the transmission and retention of cultural information. If it is true that culturally significant physical landscapes perform an indispensable communicative function, it would be safe to assume that internet modules fail in some way to facilitate the crucial conditions under which cultural information is transmitted.

The concept of place constitutes the primary difference between the tribal and the digital actual and virtual histories. The internet may oppose the topocentrism of traditional performance. The internet has no allegiance to certain places or times; the same content can be viewed anywhere in the world at all hours. Where available through internet cafes or private networks, the internet is everywhere and nowhere. Sophisticated technologies, network access, and technical skills are required to access the internet. When these elements converge, the internet is a portal to see and hear information that would be displaced from a traditional viewpoint. On the Columbia Plateau, sacred space and time emerge from the careful mix of sophisticated body and speech technologies, producing “portals to the sacred” (Walker 1991). The raconteur is the internet connection, as it were, to a story told without the necessary ecological context.

Can these modules, as the narrators say, provide the transportation infrastructure necessary for tribal storytelling? This problem of sacred place in the internet can be triangulated through an alternative reading of Schitsu’umsh time and spatiality. The Schitsu’umsh narrator states, “the way the Schitsu’umsh relate to “‘time’ and ‘space’ and ‘causation’ differs considerably” (Coeur d’Alene 2002b). Native American autobiographical narratives focus on a “communal or relational identity and tend to be cyclical rather than lineal” (Vizenor 1994:100). The distracted experience of using the internet: reading, then viewing video, then backtracking, reading again, and then going in another direction, etc., creates an experience where time, space, and causation are convoluted and inverted. Web links afford opportunities to transcend the rigid order of place and time. Circular phenomenologies of time are available in internet journeys and by traditional Columbia Plateau peoples. The multimedia and hypertextuality of the internet creates an environment in which tribal historiographies can adapt to the changing communicative modalities of today and in the future. Essentially, “mythology is passing from a ritual act . . . —from a mythology traveled, within oneself and one’s world, to a mythology viewed, in speech on the page” (Frey and Hymes 1998:598).

Thus while it is not the same as being in physical proximity to an elder in a traditional location, the Schitsu’umsh believe that the module viewer travels, if they so choose, with elder Lawrence Aripa to the era when the First People were creating the canyons, waterfalls, outcrops, and mountains of the Columbia Plateau. The things that might be mentioned in the story—Beaver’s tail, Raven’s talons, and Bluejay’s beak—are sacrosanct and remade in ritual performance and something transfers to the viewer. Native American storytellers and their audiences utilize, and in the ideal, overcome the gross boundaries of time, place, and convention. The amount of empathy needed to commune is large and is more immense as more layers of mediation distance the viewer from the raconteur but, it seems, with Web 1.0 technologies, these tribal members are hopeful.

## Hypertext Cartographies

IDM might someday be one of the tools the Schitsu’umsh use to solve problems of linking stories to spaces. Using Geospatial Information Systems (GIS), the Schitsu’umsh create hypertext cartographies consisting of audio, video, and photographic data connected to interactive digital maps (Coeur d’Alene 2002c). As of 2005, the Kootenai-Salish, neighbors to the Schitsu’umsh, had a similar cartographic program (John Sirois, personal communication

2004). While working at the Colville Confederated Tribes (2003–2005), we were developing media production programs that were geospatially specific, but we did not fully integrate GIS software and video utilities. As of 2010, GPS enablement has become an integral component of most smart phones, encouraging in its users geographical awareness.

By hypertext cartography I refer to that interface that consists of a map with possible links to other materials. Hypertext cartographies appear interactive and three dimensional on the monitor. As the viewer clicks on a particular location on the map, information about a gathering place visited as a youth, for example, or a prehistoric harpooning station “drops down [with] up to three or four perspectives that might include a story told by an elder in both Coeur d’Alene and English, a history, as well as the site’s videos and slides” (Coeur d’Alene Tribe 2002c).

Schitsu’umsh elder Felix Aripa, of a handful of speakers the most knowledgeable of Schitsu’umsh language, is optimistic about hypertext cartography and IDM. Linking indigenous language to sacred and gathering localities with digital technology fuses language and landscape, to the best of Web 1.0’s technical abilities. In their endeavors in hypertext cartography, the Schitsu’umsh have gathered 35 hours of video, 30 hours of audio, and 1500 photographs from fieldwork at 130 traditional cultural properties (TCPs). Other tribal bodies, particularly the Yakama and Colville, have now produced similarly sized databases. Partially because of the money earned in the course of contract work with the federal hydroelectric dam managers, these tribes have funded some of the most comprehensive IDM projects in Native American country.

This is a description of the most complex form of interactivity possible in indigenous hypertext cartography and a most sophisticated use of IDM in the service of tribalism in the Web 1.0 era. Certainly a “deep map” (McLucas 2004), this technology represents a place’s presence on all fronts, personally and positively, accurately and detailed. IDM is an adjunct to attempts to challenge the hegemony of descriptive archaeological and TCP reporting. But it also creates its own dominant regime of use. In typical Web 1.0 fashion, the list of possible links are static and not augmentable by the online audience who cannot leave comments or add their own narratives of memory to the database. The audience is not a participant but an engaged listener, not a writer but a reader of this traditional information.

### Web 2.0 and *One Heart for the People*

As discussed above, Web 1.0 sites agree with some aspects of traditional culture. To better understand the contradictions Web 1.0 sites pose to traditional histories and anthropological notions of culture, consider for a moment how Web 2.0 sites are created and the intent behind their creation. Web 2.0 sites (2005–today) are socially as opposed to institutionally created, and capable of displaying multimedia. One Web 2.0 site, *One Heart for the People*, a Colville tribal social media site, is described as such:

“One Heart for the People [OH] is a social network of enrolled members of the Colville Confederated Tribes, friends, and extended family. All are welcome here on this digital reservation. We are a forum designed for positive change, dedicated to the protection of our children, elders . . . and our sovereignty” (Colville Confederated Tribes n.d.).

Issues discussed above such as ethnopoetics, performance, storyscapes, and sacred time are not explicitly discussed on OH. The goal of this article is not to compare how these traditional notions are represented in two different eras of internet authorship. These Web 2.0 sites offer less an official history and more a real-time reflection of culture in process and dialogue. With the exception of the software platform itself, the Web 2.0 is made entirely by indigenous people. It is not content filtered through tribal business councils or anthropologists. On OH, the content emerges from volunteered and digitalized tribal social life. The site was created for different reasons and with different technologies, but a brief analysis of *One Heart* opens up a discussion of what Web 1.0 sites lack for future iterations of IDM.

*One Heart* began in December 2007 in the Web 2.0 model. It is an interactive social media site networking together tribal individuals. Tribal members can upload blogs, write in forums, start groups, leave comments, post videos and photographs. People can ‘friend’ and ‘follow’ each others’ activities online. Tribal members use the site to reconnect with off-reservation friends, stay connected with local family, argue politics and environmental policy, sell things, plan events, and much more. In these capacities, *One Heart* is a social networking site like Facebook, which began roughly at the same time.

The screenshot shows the opening page of the 'One Heart for the People' website. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Friends', 'Profile Photo', and 'Content'. Below the tabs, the page is organized into several columns and sections:

- Members:** A grid of 16 profile pictures, with a '+ Invite More' link and a 'View All' link below.
- YOU ARE ON THE HOME PAGE OF "ONE HEART FOR THE PEOPLE.COM":** A central banner with a welcome message: "One Heart for the People is a social network of enrolled members of the Colville Confederated Tribes, friends, and extended family. All are welcome here on this digital reservation. We are a forum designed for positive change, dedicated to the protection of our children, elders... and our sovereignty."
- Events:** A section with two event listings:
  - October 29 Friday:** "Let's Get It Started" - October 29, 2010 to October 31, 2010 - Lake Roosevelt HS. Description: "Let's Get It Started Basketball Tournament Oct. 29-31, 2010 Men's Division & Women's Division (10 players per roster) Lake Roosevelt High School - Coulee Dam, WA Entry Fee (no refunds) \$275 p... Organized by Camille Pleasants | Type: basketball, tournament".
  - April 10 Sunday:** "Texas Hold'em tournament" - April 10, 2011 all day - Keller Community Center. Description: "The Keller Rodeo Committee is having a Texas Hold'em tournament in Keller on April 10th starting at 10am. It will consist of a 25 dollar buy in with 13.00 going into the pot and a 25 dollar re-buy. A... Organized by Keller Rodeo Committee | Type: fundraiser".
- Photos:** A section with a large photo of people in costumes and a '+ Add Photos' link and a 'View All' link below.
- Blog Posts:** A vertical list of posts:
  - Please help Nespelem Middle School -- You can today through 10/26/10:** Posted by Sheri Edwards on October 24, 2010 at 1:23pm.
  - Per Capitas:** Posted by Nina Baker on October 24, 2010 at 12:58pm — 3 Comments.
  - New Casino going in Okanagan:** Posted by benito flores sr on October 23, 2010 at 4:50am.
  - Arrow Lakes Memorial Day Pow:** (partially visible)
- Latest Activity:** A section at the bottom left.
- Groups:** A section at the bottom center.
- Right Sidebar:** A user profile for 'Adam Fish' with links for 'Sign Out', 'Inbox', 'Alerts', 'Friends - Invite', 'Settings', and a 'Quick Add...' dropdown menu.

Fig. 2. Opening page of *One Heart for the People* website (Colville Confederated Tribes n.d.).

*One Heart* is on the Ning platform, a social media template for networking together a community. Anyone can start a Ning network by simply registering on the ning.com and encouraging people to create profiles on the specifically themed Ning group. Every Ning network includes the capacity to create the overall site design, unique member profiles, community invitations, activity feeds, RSS feeds, photos and video, chat functions, groups, forums, blogs, event posts, and mobile Ning applications. The network originator has specific rights such as the capacity to moderate discussion, set privacy functions, and access analytical data. By mid-2009, there were over one million Ning networks. Ning was invented by Marc Andreessen the inventor of the first web graphic web-browser, Mosaic (later Netscape Navigator). Andreessen is an advocate of free and open source software and social media and advises or invests in the major social networking sites driving the Web 2.0 world: Twitter, Ebay, Digg, and Facebook.

As of the start of 2010, *One Heart* had 1440 members out of approximately 8700 Colville tribal members and descendents. If all 1440 members of *One Heart* are members and descendents, then the social site represents a significant 16% of the Colville population. The sites founder Ben Alex Dupris says it is for everyone (McNeel 2008) but it is strongly geared towards Colville tribal members. Non-tribal members can work around this register by showing some knowledge of the 12 bands of the Colville Tribe. When one registers, the only required questions are your full name, your Colville tribal band affiliation, and information about yourself. The screening question is to name one of the bands of the Colville Tribe. Thus, with tribal membership or tribal knowledge of the bands, one can join the network.

Dupris said, “The idea was freedom of the press and transparency of government and accountability, all the issues the general membership is concerned about when it comes to tribal politics, language preservation and community” (McNeel 2008). According to Dupris, extant tribal resources and political structures were not achieving tribal transparency. He said one goal was to encourage political discussion. “It’s very important to have that dialogue, and allow people to say what they have to say, instead of waiting for a district meeting, once every four months. You have instant feedback. It expedites the process of political discussion” (Mehaffey 2008). According to Dupris, Web 2.0 systems need to be used to achieve a dialogic environment. In contrast to other top-down systems of post-colonial development, Dupris devised *One Heart* to tap both a need and an internal capacity, “It’s not just the young hotshot kids who know about technology, but it’s also the councilmen, our elders, people who say they’ve felt disconnected from the tribe for years” (McNeel 2008). With Dupris’s stated focus on impacting tribal politics, it is important to look closer at that arena.

*One Heart* is not an operation officially sanctioned by the business council of the Colville Confederated Tribes, which attempted to shut down use of the site on tribal government servers, according to Dupris. The Colville Confederated Tribes has media producing capacity within the History and Archaeology (H/A) Program, where I once worked. In order to understand the possibilities and threats posed by IDM Web 2.0 sites such as *One Heart*, contrast the proprietary strategy for the production of passive viewing tribal ‘cinema’ versus the non-proprietary and dynamic Web 2.0 environment of *One Heart*. At the H/A Program, we produced several films about lost fishing grounds. Each of these films was for internal or promotional use, was not uploaded to the public internet, given to schools, or shown at film festivals. Instead, they were kept in private and in password protected databases that only the head of H/A could access.

The Colville Confederated Tribes H/A department has invested in digital video production since 2003. In 2005, I was hired by the Colville Confederated Tribes H/A and saw

the production of several videos funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about TCPs in the area of river wide dams. These videos were shown in acts of advocacy for their historical causes and to provide to the federal government evidence about how the tribe was spending its money. The Colville Confederated Tribes, as a tribal government, is very private and proprietary about their cultural property and representation. So as not to disturb the rights to privacy of its traditional customs, history, and pictures, the Colville Confederated Tribes government restricts access to these videos and their source materials. Thus, while in-house proprietary video production is supported by the tribal government and privately held, a relatively open social media site like *One Heart* did not find support. On the one hand, the uncontrollability of Web 2.0 social production challenges the proprietary culture of indigenous sovereignty. On the other hand, tribal groups using platforms such as Ning, like *One Heart*, may escape tribal government's oversight but in the process become dependent upon the platforms of profit-driven digital media firms.

Scholarship on Web 2.0 has been less than critical of Web 2.0 and tends to celebrate these tools, the corporations that make them, and what they provide to publics. Benkler (2006) argues that this is the advent of a new economics of collaborative and beneficial "peer production." Kelty (2008) suggests this is the rise of "recursive publics" or technologically mediated public spheres. Jenkins (2006) claims that this online "participatory culture" is transforming the consumer into a producer. Howe (2008) elaborates on the term "crowdsourcing" to explain how anonymous publics are working together to complete large-scale projects. Shirky (2008) explains that loose aggregates of participants constitute production cultures capable of transforming industries. The technologies of Web 2.0 increase virtual connectivity and democratize cultural production for the user, but Web 2.0 platforms such as Ning, on which *One Heart* exists, is owned and operated by a group of Silicon Valley elites who have the capacity to shut it down or change the terms of service at their discretion. Thus tribal groups using such systems are at the whim of individuals without explicit concern for Native American identity. While the Web 1.0 sites give official tribal historians more control over representation, Web 1.0 also has a tendency to represent culture as statically frozen in time.

## Conclusion: Web 2.0 versus Official Tribal Histories

Prims accurately frames the tensions between the idealism and actuality of Web 1.0 tribal representation when he says:

The current relief from visual imperialism afforded to indigenous peoples by the web may be phantasmagoric, and the "virtual performative" alone will not overturn their subaltern positions in the political arena (Prims 2002:72).

The Web 1.0 tribal modules show how narrative histories vie with dominant historiographies (Bakhtin 1981) and use extant communication systems to undermine non-tribal forms of representation and content. Tribes are long experienced in resisting the control of their cultural images and likely see the internet as an open space in which to grow and affirm their tribalism. The post-textual tribalist methodology is to

undermine and surmount, with imagination and the performance of new stories, the manifest manners of scriptural simulations and “authentic” representations of the tribes in the literature of dominance (Visenor 1994:17).

Prims’s taunt (2002) is noteworthy. The IDM approach will not “overturn” the marginalization of Native Americans but, like the advent of tribal newspapers, radio, television, and film, it is a crucial advancement of tribal media sovereignty. The IDM modules attempt to claim ownership over indigenous representation and thereby “undermine” false “authenticity” by presenting tribally governed public histories. The value of media sovereignty increases as social engagement becomes more informational. The challenge for tribes engaging with public IDM projects is to use the emergent technologies to overcome the tendency towards representation of a frozen digital ‘ethnographic present.’ Culture is in process and history is in motion. Tribes are not stuck in a timeless order. The Web 1.0 pages I have discussed above, however, are now dated and have not been updated since 2005. The modules were designed to be regularly updated by the tribal administrators but not by the user. Tribal concerns over representation and the difficulty of achieving consensus with tribal business councils encourages tribes to produce an “official” version of their history. Web 2.0 systems, on the other hand, pose new possibilities and challenges to tribal historiography. Web 2.0 forms of site interactivity and mutability threaten formal official history while modeling the accurately dynamic and processual nature of culture as unfolding throughout time and in social dialogue.

Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 refer to distinct eras and practices of Internet technology. Web 1.0 technology is not solely relegated to a period (1994–2004) that was replaced by Web 2.0 technologies (2005–today). Rather, they are tools with distinct possibilities as well as dangers. Web 2.0 includes and adds upon Web 1.0 technologies. For a particular purpose, by a particular segment of the Tribe, for a particular audience, these Columbia Plateau people used these Web 1.0 tools. The Colville Confederated Tribes, also a Columbia Plateau tribe, for a particular purpose, by a particular segment of the Tribe, for a particular type of contributor, used the Web 2.0 tools. Both types of technology and their accompanying applications in the Lifelong Learning modules and *One Heart* projects have different functions and purposes. The different applications of the technologies show how cultural concerns mediate technological deployments. The examples show the different ways differing segments of these communities communicate and share information, in their own terms, for different goals.

The Lifelong Learning modules were designed and function to help provide Tribally-endorsed and elder approved information for educational purposes on a full range of topics to the general, non-Indian population. This is why they needed cultural property rights agreements and extensive content review by the Tribal elders and cultural committees. This is why they focused on Lewis and Clark and “setting the record straight” by providing a Native perspective on sovereignty, governance, health, economic development, natural resources, etc. This is why they included curriculum and teaching modules to effectively use this material in a classroom setting. In this process they anchored the projects in the history, culture, and sovereignty programs of the tribes through tribally sanctioned processes. For the reasons that Web 1.0 provides a way of formally framing traditional views, the tribes would likely still rely upon Web 1.0 technology as the primary means of framing and disseminating this type of information and cultural sensitive material.

With their Web 1.0 modules Shitsu‘umsh were extremely proprietary about representations of their cultural heritage. The internet poses new challenges for indigenous intellectual property rights. Information can be distributed, reinterpreted, and exploited out of context on the internet. The Schitsu‘umsh drafted an intellectual property rights agreement giving them complete control over the module, its direction, and existence, now and into the future (Coeur d’Alene 2002g). It is technically impossible to copy either text or pictures from the module. The production of IDM, in consortium with elders and new media producers, while working under comprehensive intellectual property rights agreements, strikes a balance for indigenous people who claim a place in the dot-commons. The modules claim and defend indigenous identities in cyberspace while freezing that identity in a specific technological and political history.

Consider for a moment the Columbia Plateau colonial historiography. For over a century, Anglo-American anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians have mediated Columbia Plateau Native American cultural content with direct funding from the U.S. federal government (Fish 2005). This work, usually salvage archaeology and salvage ethnography, done to standards of the day, have profound political implications today, as witnessed by the power of the Indians Claims Commission, by setting restrictive trends in methodology, content, form, temporal depth, and geospatial breadth. Traditional people are offended by the publicizing of incorrect, sacred, and private content in these technical reports, interpretive ethnographies, and romanticized films. Bureaucratic, militaristic, legal, and scientific historiography informed Native American archaeology through the 19th and 20th centuries (Kehoe 1998, Patterson 1995). On the Columbia Plateau in the 20th century, from 1933–1975, ‘science’ excavated village and burial grounds before the floods of reservoirs from electricity producing dams seriously disturbed tribal subsistence and identity (Anonymous circa 1939; Collier, Hudson, and Ford 1942; Crane 2002; Dickson 1998; Fielder 1979; Fryxell and Keel 1969; Hicks 2004; Krieger 1927; Nez Perce Tribe 1998; Perry 1939; Robert 1948; Sprague and Birkby 1970).

Considering the colonial tenor of this historiography such projects of self-determined representation are certainly improvements. And yet, the ease of becoming an internet author will make control over official tribal histories difficult. The Web 1.0 sites originated out of elders’ desires to tell their stories correctly. The Tribal government approved the content and the format and the modules were released. On Web 2.0 platforms a greater diversity of opinions from a tribal perspective can be distributed. While more individuals can express themselves, the tribe loses control over some of its collective authorial power. Increasing interactivity in the Web 2.0 era may contribute to greater freedom of expression for tribal members, but also increases the threat of “unofficial” tribal information escaping the control of tribal governments.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This text represents only the interpretations and observations of its author. This article has not been reviewed or endorsed by any of the exemplified tribes.
- <sup>2</sup> The Schitsu'umsh are politically and legally known as the Coeur d'Alene Tribe.
- <sup>3</sup> In 2011 individuals are no longer updating the Lifelong Learning sites. These are static web sites, not because of neglect but because of a technical problem. It was clearly understood by all, expressed in the design of the modules and in the Cultural Property Rights agreements, that the modules would be continually updated. The consulting anthropologist would travel to the reservations and videotaping interviews with tribal, edit the films, and upload them as new streams in the modules. That would have continued after 2005 and into today, but unfortunately the University of Idaho server housing all the Lifelong Learning modules was corrupted by a virus. All Schitsu'umsh, Nimíipuu and Warm Springs module pages were only retrieved after a year-long technical process that resulted in "static" copy of the original modules. Today, February 3, 2011, they are not viewable on the internet at all. So with the Web 1.0 technology and the design of the modules and with the Agreements, the modules would be ideally updateable and dynamic--though not in the same way as Web 2.0 websites.
- <sup>4</sup> In 2011 individuals are no longer updating the Lifelong Learning sites. These are static web sites, not because of neglect but because of a technical problem. It was clearly understood by all, expressed in the design of the modules and in the Cultural Property Rights agreements, that the modules would be continually updated. The consulting anthropologist would travel to the reservations and videotaping interviews with tribal, edit the films, and upload them as new streams in the modules. That would have continued after 2005 and into today, but unfortunately the University of Idaho server housing all the Lifelong Learning modules was corrupted by a virus. All Schitsu'umsh, Nimíipuu and Warm Springs module pages were only retrieved after a year-long technical process that resulted in "static" copy of the original modules. Today, February 3, 2011, they are not viewable on the internet at all. So with the Web 1.0 technology and the design of the modules and with the Agreements, the modules would be ideally updateable and dynamic--though not in the same way as Web 2.0 websites.
- <sup>5</sup> Technicalities are considered from the viewer's perspective. In the ten videos depicting powwow dancing, the slower 28k connection is not offered so as not to distort the dancing, instead a 512k connection is offered so the viewer can acquire a more accurate experience (Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho 2001e).
- <sup>6</sup> With the ease of a click, it is possible to hear the pronunciation of major consonants, vowels, and phrases. With the advent of broadband across the Coeur d'Alene reservation this will give, to anyone interested, access to traditional language instruction. Schitsu'umsh living off the Reservation can access the website, hear the native language and the traditional teachings. For the advanced student there exist ample possibilities to practice with Felix Aripa as he talks in Schitsu'umsh about Coyote and his friends. On a video clip on the Nimíipuu module, Horace Axtell, in Nimípuutimptneewit, the Nez Perce Sahaptian dialect, tells of an account of the origin of Hells Canyon and Seven Devils mountains in the Snake River of Idaho (Nez Perce Tribe 2001).

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